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MAINE PUBLIC
UTIL. COMM.

12/10/2018

Harry Lanphear, Administrative Director
Maine Public Utilities Commission
18 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0018

Re: Jackman area outages
10-Person Complaint

Enclosed please find the filing for a ten person complaint pursuant to 35-A M.R.S.A. Section 1302.

I, Rev. Darien (Deke) Sawyer am filing as the lead petitioner in this case. I would like the PUC to investigate the surge in power outages for the Jackman area from 2013 to present and hold CMP accountable to provide reliable service at a reasonable price for the residents of Jackman and surrounding communities. It is unfair for CMP to charge standard pricing while delivering sub-standard service. I also have a few questions that I would like answered during this process;

1. What specific action plan will CMP put in place to correct the number and durations of outages each year?
2. Will there be both a short term and a long term plan?
3. Will these plans be available to the residents of our communities?
4. How will follow through be measured and by whom?
5. What is the life expectancy of the powerlines in use north of the Forks
6. Are any of them due or overdue for replacement?
7. If so, when will they be replaced?

Sincerely, Rev. Darien (Deke) Sawyer
276 Long Pond Rd
Jackman, Maine 04945
dekesawyer@hotmail.com
207-668-7705

Ten-Person Complaint Pursuant to 35-A M.R.S.A. Section 1302.

We, the undersigned complainants, are customers of Central Maine Power Company (CMP) and hold separate accounts with the utility. We request that the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) on its own initiative, open a case to determine if CMP's practices and/or actions are "in any respect unreasonable, insufficient or unjustly discriminatory; or that a service is inadequate". Jackman and surrounding communities have endured an increase of 275% more outages between 2013 and 2017 and a duration of power loss of 440%. This year is no exception and there is no long term plan by CMP to provide better service. Please note we have collected data and accompanying graphs to show, should you open a case on our behalf. At a meeting in Jackman March 2018, CMP representatives acknowledged that we had legitimate concerns, without providing any answers that would improve service long term. We therefore turn to the PUC as our watchdog, a role you have fulfilled since 1913.

We ascertain that while CMP charges us the same rate for delivery, we get far less reliable service than other Maine customers. We note that according to statute 35-A MRS § 702 a. Unjust discrimination. It is unlawful for a public utility to give any undue or unreasonable preference, advantage, prejudice or disadvantage to a particular person... CMP outages are putting elderly citizens, shut-ins and families of young children at risk during cold weather in our area. Further; these extended outages increase risks of frozen pipes and extensive damage to homes and businesses. Some citizens without cell phone coverage cannot access 911 when there is a loss of power. Almost half the area ratepayers have had to purchase generators, causing financial stress, and lack of reliable power has a negative effect on future business, economic and community growth.

We assert that CMP's deteriorating reliability and frequent, lengthening outage periods are due to a diminished workforce, lack of parts inventory in trucks, old brittle and outdated wires and equipment, moving our power source to Wyman (which effectively doubled the distance and increasing the risk of storm damage interruptions by 200%) and a lack of proactive planning. We find that because of lack of workforce, normal and sufficient line inspections to care for problem equipment, wires and leaning trees is inadequate. Currently CMP's business plan seems to include contracting out for service crews, rather than replacing workers lost due to attrition. There is no incentive for contracted companies to reduce outages or duration, resulting in longer and more often power losses. Also these part time contracted crews do not have intimate knowledge of equipment and lines, resulting in longer outages. Being located on a "tie line", CMP's sole means of delivering power for the Jackman area, CMP has no other power line or source of backup power for this area. Backup power could be available in Canada (8 miles away) and Rockwood (20 miles) but CMP refuses to provide our communities backup.

We would also like to reference Final Order on Docket No 94-462 on September 1, 1995 PUC, Donald A. Dubois, M.D. et al v. Central Maine Power Company. CMP was ordered to present a long term plan and continue adequate personnel until such long term plan could be effected. Obviously their long term plan was a complete failure and a new one is needed. Jackman's power reliability problems are worse now than in 1995. It appears to us, that CMP's approach towards Jackman is highly reactive and seriously lacking in proactive planning.

Therefore; we request the Public Utilities Commission open an investigation, with an eye toward providing justice and relief to CMP ratepayers both short and long term. We believe it is fair to expect full reliable service, since we are paying full price for delivery to CMP. We also note that according to statute 35-A MRS § 301 – Every public utility shall furnish safe, reasonable and adequate facilities and service. We hereby request that the Maine Public Utilities Commission (PUC) promptly investigate this complaint while referencing state statutes, previous Docket No 94-462 and accompanying judgement, CMP's long term plan presented to the PUC 1995-96 Accordingly we request and expect the PUC take all necessary action to satisfy this complaint, up to and including statute 35-A MRS § 1511 – The commission may, in an adjudicatory proceeding, suspend or revoke the authority of a public utility to provide service upon a finding that the public utility is unfit to provide safe, adequate and reliable service at rates that are just and reasonable.

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